

# Jason E Geistweidt

## Artist Statement

When I was young I would build elaborate tents inside my room with tunnels leading to separate spaces for sleeping, drawing, and reading. My tent even had a phone, a tiny black and white television, and my father's shortwave radio receiver – the crown jewel. In the dark of night, huddled in bedsheet walls, I tuned into the world: the BBC, south American dance parties, and those mysterious frequencies that played revolutionary music followed by solemn foreign statements. In this pre-Internet time, I was surfing the world, and it was an impromptu performance: my left hand adjusting the antennae, my right cramping as I held the tuning knob in just the right place. The experience was physical, aleatory, and intimate.

In my creative practice I continue to return to these themes of intimate encounters, physical connections, and chance processes. My sound art works are constructed either around the human voice or contact microphone recordings – intimate noises arising from within the body or sounds only heard by pressing close to the object. In my telematic practice, I interconnect spaces, designing systems for artists to project themselves into remote stages and deploy sensor arrays to collect ambient activity and transmit it back to a local venue for sonification/visualization. Chance operations come into play in my generative practices as natural language processors rewrite texts and re-contextualize images, creating unique, ephemeral events.

My process is experimental, I am poking around a bit and I do not have a preconceived notion of what the outcome of my exploration will be. To paraphrase Cage, I am engaging in these practices *precisely* to see what is possible and am curious to discover what will happen. As I critique my progress, I wish to take on the role of observer as well as instigator, and by stepping away from the position of creator, I can assess if the work *activates* the audience as John Dewey describes in this treatise *Art as Experience* – specifically, ensuring that in viewing the work, the audience experiences its processes and outcomes in the same way I did during the creative process.

Currently I am dividing my time between a number of projects: *Twittage*, my experiments in automatic image composition via the Twitter open stream API; *netChimes*, a globally-distributed wind actuated instrument; *Invisible Things*, a song cycle investigating the experience of embodiment, sentience, and otherness; and completing *August 2016*, a postal work comprised of “101 embodied task to be realized by unknown individuals in an indeterminate place at an unspecified time.”